

Message Text

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ACTION HA-05

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 AID-05 INSE-00 /099 W
-----125209 181417Z /64

R 170536Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4267
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY MANILA
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
USMISSION GENEVA
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

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E. O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SREF
SUBJ: ATROCITIES COMMITTED AGAINST INDOCHINESE REFUGEES
EN ROUTE TO MALAYSIA

1. DURING APRIL 15- MAY 15 TOURS THROUGH MALAYSIAN
BOAT REFUGEE CAMPS EMBASSY PERSONNEL WERE STRUCK BY
INCIDENCE OF REPORTS OF CRIMES COMMITTED AGAINST
INDOCHINESE REFUGEES ON HIGH SEAS.

2. EXPLOITATION OF REFUGEES IS AN OLD AND OFT REPEATED
TALE, BUT RAPE, ROBBERY AND MURDER, OUTRIGHT ACTS OF
SEEMINGLY ORGANIZED PIRACY, ARE NOW REPORTED TO BE
COMMON OCCURRENCES BY SURVIVORS AMONG REFUGEES WHO HAVE
FINALLY REACHED ASYLUM IN MALAYSIAN CAMPS.

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3. FROM 35 PCT TO 50 PCT OF APRIL AND MAY BOAT REFUGEE
ARRIVALS POLLED INDICATE THAT THEY HAVE BEEN
ACCOSTED AT SEA BY PERSONS KNOWN TO BE THAI
NATIONALS. STANDARD PLOY FOR PIRATES IS TO APPROACH
REFUGEE VESSELS WITH OFFERS OF FOOD, FUEL AND WATER.
REFUGEE MEN ARE INVITED ABOARD TO MOVE RELIEF

SUPPLIES. MEN ARE COVERED WITH FIREARMS AND ARE BOUND.

4. REFUGEE BOATS ARE THEN BOARDED. PIRATES TAKE VIRTUALLY ALL POSSESSIONS OF REFUGEES, TO INCLUDE CLOTHES AND SHOES, AND, OFTEN RAPE FEMALE REFUGEES. REFUGEE MEN ARE THROWN INTO SEA AND REFUGEE BOATS ARE CUT ADRIFT TO SURVIVE AS BEST THEY MIGHT.

5. EXAMPLE CITED ARE THOSE OF TWO BOATLOADS OF REFUGEES NOW IN ASYLUM IN KELANTAN STATE, MALAYSIA. ON OR ABOUT APRIL 2, 1978, A SMALL BOATLOAD OF REFUGEES IN THAI WATERS, AT A POSITION ESTIMATED TO BE MIDWAY BETWEEN TIP OF SOUTH VIET-NAM AND EXTREME NORTHEAST OF PENINSULAR MALAYSIA, WAS APPROACHED BY THAI VESSEL. REFUGEE BOAT (NO. 1546) WAS BOARDED AND PASSENGERS WERE KNIFED. A CRIPPLED BOY, ATTEMPTING TO DEFEND HIS SISTERS, WAS THROWN OVERBOARD. HE DROWNED. GIRLS WERE RAPED AND ALL POSSESSIONS OF REFUGEES WERE STOLEN BY PIRATES.

6. IN SECOND INSTANCE A SMALL, OVERCROWDED REFUGEE VESSEL IN WATERS JUST OFF EAST COAST KRA ISTHMUS VICINITY THIA-MALAYSIAN BORDER WAS PILLAGED BY PIRATES. A SECOND THAI BOAT SUBSEQUENTLY BOARDED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DEFENSELESS REFUGEE CRAFT AT 1530 HOURS (LT) MAY 11, 1978. CREW, FINDING NOTHING OF VALUE LEFT TO STEAL, SHOT REFUGEE BOY FOR SPITE. YOUNG MAN NOW RECOVERING IN MALAYSIAN HOSPITAL. THAI BOAT NUMBER WAS 0399.

7. MALAYSIAN POLICE AUTHORITIES EXPRESS NO SURPRISE AT RAVAGES OF PIRATES IN THAI- MALAYSIAN WATERS. POLICE NOTE MALAY FISHERMEN OFTEN VICTIMIZED BY WELL-ORGANIZED THAI PIRATES. LOCAL NEWSPAPER REPORTED TODAY THAI POLICEMAN KILLED IN FIREFIGHT BETWEEN PIRATES AND THAI POLICE LAUNCH. PIRATES WERE ARMED WITH AUTOMATIC WEAPONS AND (M-79) GRENADE LAUNCHERS.

8. THERE IS PROBABLY NO DEARTH OF WEAPONS AVAILABLE IN VIET-NAM AFTER WAR YEARS. ARMS RANGING FROM 106 MM RECOILLESS RIFLE AND M-60 MACHINEGUNS TO CARBINES AND M-16'S HAVE BEEN CONFISCATED FROM ARRIVING REFUGEES BY ROYAL MALAYSIAN POLICE. ARMED REFUGEE VESSELS ARE BY FAR EXCEPTIONS, HOWEVER, AND BOATS ARE, AS A RULE, EASY MARKS FOR PIRATES.

9. GIVEN INCREASING INCIDENCE OF REFUGEES FALLING
VICTIM TO PIRATES ON HIGH SEAS, DEPARTMENT ADVISED
OF GROWING HAZARD TO LIVES OF REFUGEES IN HOPES THAT
MERCHANT VESSELS AND NAVAL UNITS OF ALL NATIONS
WILL ENDEAVOR TO ASSIST REFUGEES AS THEY ARE
ENCOUNTERED ON HIGH SEAS.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REFUGEES, ATROCITIES, SEA RESCUES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 may 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978KUALA04287
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780209-0691
Format: TEL
From: KUALA LUMPUR
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780550/aaaabqgh.tel
Line Count: 124
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 1b253e9c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION HA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 01 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2668515
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ATROCITIES COMMITTED AGAINST INDOCHINESE REFUGEES EN ROUTE TO MALAYSIA
TAGS: SREF
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/1b253e9c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014